



# News Release

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## **Riverside Public Utilities Warns Customers About Telephone Utility Payment Scam**

**Riverside, Calif.** – Riverside Public Utilities' (RPU) water and electric customers should be aware of a telephone scam that has surfaced in the City of Riverside where customers are being told that RPU needs to change out their meters or their next month's bill will be extremely high. The customer is then asked to pay the scammer several hundred dollars to enable the fictitious meter change out.

RPU has also learned that the caller ID shown on the customer's phone is the utility's 782-0330 Customer Service number, making it appear as though the calls are being generated from the utility directly. While 782-0330 is RPU's main phone for customer accounts and billing questions, for security reasons it will never appear on a customer's caller ID.

"Riverside Public Utilities customers should remember that the utility would never call and ask for personal payment information nor request it in person at a customer's home or business," said RPU General Manager Girish Balachandran. "If any of our customers receives a call like this, they are urged to please inform us immediately."

Customers of RPU are contacted via paper billing statements, online billing emails, through late payment reminder mailings, or green 48-hour Notice notification tags placed at utility property sites only. Any RPU personnel out in the community drive clearly marked city vehicles, wear city uniforms, and display photo identification.

Scams like this have been going on in different parts of the country for several years. After recent reports of the scam occurring in Corona, the city's Department of Water and Power alerted customers to be aware of phone calls from unauthorized individuals falsely representing the utility who demand credit card or Pay Pal account information.

Any additional late payment contact would only come from Riverside Public Utilities' Credit and Collections Department. Customers who have any questions about a suspicious phone call demanding payments or who have questions regarding an overdue account can contact RPU at (951) 826-5311.

For additional information about Riverside Public Utilities follow us on Facebook through #RiversidePublicUtilities and Twitter through #RPUNews

Established in 1895, Riverside Public Utilities is a consumer-owned water and electric utility governed by a board of nine community volunteers that provides high quality, reliable services to over 107,500 metered electric customers and up to 64,500 metered water customers throughout the City of Riverside. The Utility is committed to increased use of renewable energy resources and sustainable living practices that help reduce environmental impacts within the City of Riverside and the state of California. [www.RiversidePublicUtilities.com](http://www.RiversidePublicUtilities.com) [www.GreenRiverside.com](http://www.GreenRiverside.com) [www.BlueRiverside.com](http://www.BlueRiverside.com)